

## **REMARKS**

Claims 1-31 are now pending in the application. Claims 1-2 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,153,505 to Abita et al. ("Abita"); claims 3-5, 10-14, 18-21, and 25-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abita in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,722,646 to Soderberg ("Soderberg"); claim 7 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abita in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,712,347 to Fredrickson; claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abita in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,286,778 to Follmeyer ("Follmeyer"); claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abita and Follmeyer and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,243,745 to Varnau ("Varnau"); claims 15, 22, and 29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abita in view of Soderberg and in further view of Fredrickson; claims 16, 23, and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Abita in view of Soderberg and in further view of Follmeyer; and claims 17, 24, and 31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abita in view of Soderberg and further in view of Varnau. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

### **REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102**

Claims 1-2 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Abita (U.S. Patent No. 5,153,505). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1, 10, 18, and 25 have been amended such that the reconfigurable pallet is for an assembly line and to include the limitation that the modular stanchions are load-bearing and the pallet is configured to support an engine or vehicle component. The word "is" has been removed from claim 10 to correct a typographical anomaly.

Support in the Specification for the amendments is at page 6, paragraph 0025 "to support heavier products such as an engine" and at page 5, paragraph 0023 "the generic assembly line 10 can depict an engine, chassis, a vehicle sub-assembly or any type of vehicle oriented assembly line. More broadly, the generic assembly line 10 can depict any type of assembly line across all industries."

Abita is directed to a test fixture for testing electrical circuits (column 2, lines 12-15). The fixture is adaptable for subminiature and various micro-scale circuits having an area as small as  $0.10 \text{ cm}^2$  (column 2, lines 51-62 and column 4, lines 60-63). These circuits are generally not load-inducing because they weigh merely a few grams. The ultralight weight and fragile nature of the electrical circuits require delicate or fragile connector assemblies that are incapable of supporting a load, such as an engine or vehicle component. Abita does not teach or disclose Applicants' a reconfigurable pallet for an assembly line including a plurality of load-bearing modular stanchions.

Insofar as the cited reference does not disclose the invention of claims 1, 10, 18, and 25, applicants believe that independent claim 1 and, by dependence, claims 2 and 6 are now distinguished from the prior art, and that, accordingly, the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) should be withdrawn. Consideration and action in that regard are respectfully solicited.

**REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103**

The Examiner's attention is respectfully directed to the discussion of amendments and Abita in remarks directed to the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection.

As amended, independent claims 1, 10, 18, and 25 provide a reconfigurable pallet for an assembly line where the modular stanchions are load-bearing and configured to support an engine or vehicle component. Applicants assert that the primary reference Abita does not provide the elements of a reconfigurable pallet for an assembly line having load-bearing modular stanchions, and the secondary references Soderberg, Frederickson, Follmeyer, and/or Varnau fail to remedy the Abita deficiency. Therefore, the various combinations of Abita, Soderberg, Fredrickson, Follmeyer, and/or Varnau fail to teach or suggest any of the claimed matter of independent claims 1, 10, 18, and 25 and dependent claims 2-8, 11-17, 19-24, and 26-31.

Further, there is no motivation to combine the Abita reference directed to a test fixture for testing subminiature electrical circuits with the tooling apparatus of Soderberg, the truss jig setting system of Fredrickson, the positioning fixture for use with a machining center of Varnau, or the table fixture to hold a part in operative relationship with a tool of Follmeyer. Applicants believe that all independent claims and dependents therefrom are now patentably distinguished from the cited references. Accordingly, the respective rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn. Consideration and action in that regard are respectfully solicited.

## CONCLUSION

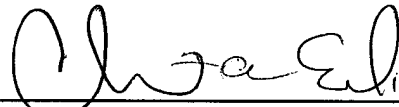
It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

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By: \_\_\_\_\_



Christopher A. Eusebi, Reg. No. 44,672

HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.  
P.O. Box 828  
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48303  
(248) 641-1600

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS:  
KATHRYN A. MARRA  
GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION  
LEGAL STAFF - Mail Code 482-C23-B21  
P.O. Box 300  
Detroit, MI 48265-3000  
(313) 655-4708

CAE/SDJ/tp